DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 307 868 IR 052 753

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TITLE Independent Colleges Archives and Institutional Records Network: A Feasibility Study. A Report to the Participating Colleges and to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.
INSTITUTION Holy Family Coll., Philadelphia, PA.
PUB DATE Feb 89
NOTE 69p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Access to Information; *Archives; *College Libraries; Feasibility Studies; Higher Education; *Library Networks; Library Surveys; *Needs Assessment; *Preservation; *Records Management; Systems Approach

ABSTRACT

This study explores the feasibility of a formal cooperative effort among the archives and institutional records management programs of small religious colleges in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. A systems approach is employed, in which the archives are linked to the process of creating, managing, and keeping an institution's records. The report begins by examining the literature of archives and records management. A field investigation of seven small religious colleges in the Philadelphia area is then described which involved surveys of archivists and college administrative and faculty departments. The findings of the investigation and recommendations for cooperative efforts conclude the report. Copies of the survey instruments are appended. (15 references) (EW)

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INDEPENDENT COLLEGES ARCHIVES AND INSTITUTIONAL RECORDS NETWORK: A FEASIBILITY STUDY

A REPORT TO THE PARTICIPATING COLLEGES AND TO THE PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION

FEBRUARY 1989

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Joseph McDonald

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

PREFACE

In August 1987 the Center for the Development of the Independent College Library (CDICL) in Holy Family College undertook to study the feasibility of formal cooperative effort among the archives and institutional records management programs of small, religious colleges in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. This investigation was funded in large part by a generous grant from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission under its 1987 - 1988 Regrant Program. CDICL's co-directors express their sincere appreciation to Mr. Frank Suran, Associate State Archivist for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and his staff, for their continuing interest and concern for the well-being of the project.

Holy Family College also contributed to the study, especially in their support for the project's co-directors, both of whom, as full-time employees of the college, have extensive teaching and administrative responsibilities. Sister M. Francesca, CSFN, Ph.D., president, and Lisa Woodside, Ph.D., academic dean and professor of humanities, are thanked for their considerable encouragement and for their early recognition of the importance of the study. The co-directors are also grateful for the very full and painstaking assistance given them by Mrs. Margaret Kelly, executive director of institutional advancement, and her staff, in the preparation and presentation of the original proposal.

Likewise, without the full cooperation of a stubbornly patient library staff and the support of colleagues in the science department, the investigation could not have been completed. The co-directors are very grateful to Mrs. Natlee Siegel, organizer and word processor without peer and Mrs. Florence Hogan, who as public services coordinator, orchestrated the much appreciated quick interlibrary loan deliveries.

Finally, but hardly least, the co-directors gratefully acknowledge the indispensable contribution of the institutitonal representatives, consultants, and generous purveyors of good advice. Mr. Shawn Weldon, archivist and consultant to the project, provided invaluable factfinding service and wrote the individual institutional reports. Mr. David Bearman, Archives and Museum Informatics, Pittsburgh, very kindly provided advice that brought many disconnected strands of thought together, as did Dr. Richard H. Lytle, Dean, College of Information Studies, Drexel University. Ms. Sara Shutkin, Archivist, Alverno College, Milwaukee, is sincerely thanked for her energy in showing the co-directors her college's archives and records management program and allowing them free use of her publication, A Guide to Records Management at Alverno College. And Jocelyn Toman, sometime director of library services, Neumann College, Aston, Pennsylvania, is especially thanked for her remarkable insights that put the investigators on the right track in the very beginning.

INTRODUCTION

The basic premise for the study reported here is that official institutional records, and especially those of the colleges participating in this investigation, are important, worth managing well, and worth preserving. They are important not only for the sake of the individual colleges but also as a valuable source of information on the development and practice of independent, values-based, higher education in Pennsylvania.

And yet, to have a history to be preserved, a college must necessarily focus its resources on its mission and goals in the present. When an institution is hard pressed to fund an operating budget for student recruitment, faculty salaries, building maintenance, and books and journals for the library, spending money for a fully developed and staffed archives and records management center may be luxury few can afford.

How then can these colleges assure themselves that all their records will be preserved and kept accessible for their constituencies and for social, educational, and cultural researchers and historians? Is cooperative effort, formally organized among the colleges, a feasible way to secure this assurance?

For the investigation, as funded, CDICL was able only to address the question of the general feasibility of a cooperative approach to archives and records management and the ways such an approach might be structured. If a network were found, in principle, to be feasible, CDICL committed itself to additional effort on behalf of the participating colleges. Specifically, the Center agreed to try to seek consensus on the form of such a network and to try to find the money to establish it.

For the purposes of this study archives is understood to be a place, a service, and a system. That is, it is the location where an institution's official records are kept in a way that preserves them and makes them readily accessible to users. We understand records to include the following: files, papers, charts, maps, blueprints, photographic materials, machine-readable materials (e.g., diskettes, magnetic tapes, etc.), videotapes, audiotapes, films or other documentary materials, or copies of any of the above, regardless of physical form or characteristics (Shutkin, 1988, p. 5).

As a service archives seeks to assure the institution that its official documents (understood broadly to mean all official information resources in whatever format) are preserved and safely kept somewhere and that those who need access to these documents are helped to find and use them. The skeleton of a college's first mascot badger may be kept in the anatomy laboratory. But archives knows it

is there, has appraised it and has it on an inventory list and retention schedule, holds the anatomy professor responsible for its safekeeping, and prepares and distributes a brochure descibing the fellow, how he inspired the big win over hockey ArchRival in 1921, and how he died peacefully in his sleep in 1948, the longest lived badger in captivity at that time.

Finally, as a system, archives is inextricably linked to the process of creating, managing, and keeping an institution's records. In some institutions, archives may be merely the repository for official odds and ends which the college deems worthy of preservation, but not in valuable office square footage in the administration building. In others, archives is understood as the place in the library where "rare" books, manuscripts, and other very expensive and infrequently used information resources are kept. However, for this study, archives is neither a college's attic nor a library's special collections room.

Instead, our approach to archives as a system places it at the end of a continuum which begins with the preparation of a document and finishes with its preservation and storage. Archives cannot be artificially isolated in this process. As we will argue later in this report, a college is well-advised to consider a complete records management program. Such a program will necessarily include archives, perhaps as part of a "records center". But without a systematic

effort to manage all its records and documents, a college will probably find that an archives program alone is ultimately insufficient to do what it was intended to do -- preserve the knowledge and history of the institution.

It is important to note that the colleges surveyed for this project were at various stages in the development of archival programs. Some had none, others were just beginning, and still others had well established and developed programs. None, however; had a formal institution-wide records management system controlled by the concept of a document's "life cycle". And in none did it appear that there was an explicit understanding that all records created by college managers and faculty members in the performance of their official duties are the property of the college.

This is no criticism of the colleges studied. The literature suggests that in many institutions of higher education in the United States, there is no organization-wide records management system. Legal and policy criteria may dictate the need to preserve certain student and financial records. But little else receives continuing official attention. Thus, in this study we consider archives and an institution's records management practices as a whole and developed our initial recommendations accordingly.

The participating colleges and their representatives are:

Chestnut Hill College

Sister Grace Margaret Rafferty, SSJ, M.A.

Eastern College

Mr. James Sauer, M.A., M.L.S.

Gwynedd-Mercy College

Sister M. Henrietta Connelly, RSM, M.A.

Holy Family College

Sister M. Theodosette Lewandowska, CSFN, M.A.

Immaculata College

Sister Florence Marie McCarthy, IHM, M.S.L.S.

Neumann College

Sister Ethelwina Molloy, OSF, M.A.

Rosemont College

Sister M. Dennis Lynch, SHCJ, M.S.L.S., M.A.

ARCHIVES AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT: THEIR SIGNIFICANCE AND RELATIONSHIP

Archives: Gracy (1977, p. 3) defines archives as "records of an organization containing information of continuing value systematically maintained after they have become noncurrent in the daily affairs of the organization". Cook (1986, p.5) points to two principles which distinguish "archives" from other media. First, archives are media which have been generated by an organization in the course of its business, and which are worth keeping. Second, these archives have been selected out from a larger body of media produced by the same organization, but which has not passed the selection test, and, by that criterion, is not worth keeping in the long term. The components of this larger body of media are called "records".

An archives program, or service, manages an organization's archival materials. As Cook observes (1986, p. 5):

> The important thing about archives and records is that, having been created in the course of business, it is natural that they should be administered by a service which is part of, or at any rate responsible to, the creating organisation. Every complex organisation naturally generates records and archives, and naturally also needs to manage them for its own advantage. An archives service, therefore, is an organisation which exercises these administrative functions, either within the larger organisation which created the records, or by delegation from it.

An archives program is an essential part of the management of a college from both the perspective of administration and of scholarship. Dwight Hillis Wilson (1979, p. 155) notes that an archive's "primary function is to preserve the institution"s official records for possible evidential values -- administrative, legal, or research".

An archive's first function is that of institutional memory -- the preserver of all that documents the creation, development, and history of a college. An archives preserves the records which established the institution's goals and purposes and those which now maintain them. By showing a college's origins, archives provide a context in which a college's present direction can be understood more clearly. In this regard, an archives, through its archivist, can supply a very basic and useful service to a college as the source of information for a large number of questions often addressed to administrators. Unimportant by themselves, they nevertheless require prompt and complete answers. Busy managers frequently do not have the information requested readily at hand and directing these questions to the archivist can assure timely and accurate answers.

Archival records may be needed for the settlement of land disputes, suits, and other legal entanglements. Likewise, archival records, by documenting the performance of past adminstrators (or

other employees) can provide a basis for measuring current achievement.

Although the primary purpose for preserving the records of a college is to document the history of the institution, archives also serve a broader scholarly purpose. Wilson (1979, p. 155) asserts the necessity of these records, "for research in the fields of educational standards, curriculum development, policies of faculty control, or the impact of an institution on the development of other colleges and institutions". A college's records are the raw data from which national social and institutional history is constructed. They are especially important as source documents for intellectual history. They uncover the ways in which colleges intersect with American society and reveal the aspirations and values of the American middle class. These documents are indispensable for showing the role of the college in its surrounding community, how it shaped and was shaped by this community.

Finally, Ernst Posner (1979, p. 81) suggests another reason why colleges must take the responsibility for preserving their records. He notes that unlike European practice, higher education in the United States is privately controlled. "Given their independent status, it is apparent that the documentation pertaining to the establishment and administration of colleges and universities originates exclusively with the institutions themselves and that the

story of their development cannot be told except from their own records." There is no central authority which can compel colleges to preserve their records and none which will do it for them.

Records Management: Records management can be defined as the "principles concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, use, and maintenance of records" (Shutkin, 1988, p. 4). It is a discipline which is currently attracting increased attention. As Cook notes (1986, p. 35):

> The growing sophistication of administrative practices, and the increasing complexity of organisations, together with the enormous expansion of the quantity of records produced, has made it necessary to introduce conscious mangement into this area, and to develop it as a set of techniques or as a discipline.

Historically, interest in records management has arisen from many sources. Archivists have been concerned about the control and appraisal of material passing out of current record systems into archival care. Organizations have seen records control as a way of reducing administrative costs. Centralized secretarial offices need to help regulate the flow of information and documentary media to, from, and among key departments. And legal and financial officers have been concerned with preserving and retrieving official documents for evidential and audit purposes.

The present study takes Cook's view that records management is a branch of information management. Its raw materials are the data, media, and information systems of its parent organization. Its aim (Cook, 1986, p.36) "is to achieve the best storage, retrieval, and exploitation of the data held in these media and information systems and, incidentally, to reduce the cost and improve the efficiency of record-making and keeping processes."

It is becoming increasingly apparent that archives and records management must be closely identified with each other and, in fact, are parts of a total records control system within any organization. As Cook observes (1986, p. 35):

> Where an archive service has the primary duty of serving an employing authority or institution, the records mangement aspect is of major importance, and affects all the processes which come after it. Records management can also be considered as a function exercised independently of archival management, but the two logically go together and either may suffer from the absence of the other.

And, as Saffady notes (1974, p. 204), "As the work of colleges and universities grows increasingly complex, and as educational budgets become smaller, the significance of a [college] archival program with records management authority becomes increasingly apparent". He further explains that the advantages of such a program include the protection of important historical and administrative records, the

transfer of inactive records from costly office space to low cost storage facilities, and the large savings that can be realized in reduced filing equipment purchases and reclaimed office floor space.

But cost-efficiency is not the only reason for linking archives and records management. When record management functions such as record inventories, retention schedules, common filing systems, and consistent storage procedures are conscientiously implemented across an institution, document retrieval is quick and effective and problems of record proliferation (e.g., the seemingly geometric increase in the number and cost of administrative and faculty photocopies) can be readily identified.

Commenting on the problem of records proliferation, Mitchell (1965, p. 22) observes:

> Without a program which identifies the records that go into the archives and makes some provision for getting them there, the 'archives' are apt to become dumping grounds for material that no one wants but everyone is afraid to do anything about. The absence of a program means that the college... runs the risk of losing records that should be kept, of keeping records that should be eliminated, of maintaining records under adverse circumstances, of fragmenting documentation, and of making it impossible for either the administrator or historian to benefit from past experience.

A more critical issue is that the "information explosion" and the resulting records proliferation are occurring at a time when an

organization's records are becoming more significant. As Buckland (1982, p. 26) points out:

> Society seems to have decided that you can make people honest by requiring enough documentation -- or, at least, that you can make them more accountable. The growth of compliance reports and litigation support systems are evidence of the significance of records in contemporary society... There seems little doubt that the 'marking and parking' of documents and data has become and will continue to become more significant in society.

For colleges, the issue is accountability to constituencies, including outcomes assessment. It is no longer sufficient merely to preserve financial records and student data. Rather, it is critical to document permanently the plethora of activities surrounding teaching and learning and their effectiveness and assessment. Without supporting records, state agencies, extra-mural funders, and accrediting bodies will not be convinced that the institution's accomplishments match its claims. It is the responsibility of a combined archives and records management service to assure that such documentation is properly organized and preserved.

Archives, Records Management, and the College Library: Richard J. Cox (1986, p. 112) argues vigorously for increasing cooperation between archivists and librarians:

> Despite progress in archives-library cooperation, such association is still in an embryonic stage.

> Past collaboration between the two professions has been minimal compared to unrealized potential. Librarians have shown little interest in acknowledging and building upon the contributions of archivists to the modern information society. Conversely, archivists have failed... to develop a theory that supports such cooperation. Instead, both professions are making unilateral efforts in areas of overlapping interest with only minimal coordination of action or cross-fertilization of ideas, resulting in weaker products than could be achieved by both disciplines working together.

Nevertheless, Cox also points out that there are many signs that archivists and librarians are becoming interested in working more closely together. One reason for this may be the growing recognition that both are concerned with a common problem -- information management. It is true that the documents or other non-book materials which a library may collect from external sources are different from those documents generated by the institution, and collected as the archives exercises its administrative function. Cook argues (1986, p. 7), however, that what is distinctive about archival materials is their origin, not the quality of the information which they carry. Thus, he defines archives as "information-bearing media which have been generated from within the organisation" and library and documentation materials as "information-bearing media which were originally acquired from outside the organisation". He further argues that this definition clearly places archives within the framework of all other information services.

> Together these [information] services provide, maintain, and exploit the information stock of an

> organisation or of a community. In terms of the full information picture, each type of service is dependent on the others, and users appreciate this. It would be natural if the management practices of [all] sectors could be coordinated... and it would be natural if the various branches of the profession of information management [could be] more closely integrated in their work and in their training.

In fact, rapidly developing technology is beginning to provide the means by which all information can be handled within a single system. Our understanding of information and its control is sufficiently advanced, and the information management profession sufficiently sophisticated that it is increasingly able to control simultaneously all types of information, regardless of origin or format. Obvious examples are the MARC formats for books, periodicals, audio-visual materials, and the recently-developed MARC format for archives and manuscripts control (MARC - AMC). By using the various MARC formats, a library is now able to develop a single database of information resources regardless of how they are described.

The crucial questions are whether librarians are willing to understand that the core of their responsibility is to manage information, regardless of its source; whether archivists are willing to perceive archives as belonging to the universe of information media; and whether institutions are going to understand that the issue is not management of certain types of information, but management of all of the information required to conduct their business, whether

administrative or academic. Can archivists and librarians cooperate to build a structure which will provide for effective management of their institution's information resources, both today and in the future? Lawrence J. McCrank (1986, p. 70) insists that they must:

> In such cooperation it seems that the issue should not be which methodology prevails, archival or library/bibliographic, but how to blend the two and create integrated, multi-level and multi-functional systems. The "post-custodial age of archives," to borrow F. Gerald Ham's phrase, should be, but is not yet here in the sense that archivists are still too passive, powerless, or reactive. The problem is to insure the custody of valued information and cultural resources by influencing their very generation. That problem is not solely an archival issue: it is shared by libraries as well. Both must purge the mistaken, prejudicial connotations of caretaker, custodian, or keeper, to rehabilitate its original Latin-based meaning which is active, responsible, and progressive. The latter qualities may be reconstituted in the archival and library professions through effective use of automation to achieve compatible and similar goals of service and information dissemination geographically and chronologically. The negative concept of archival data as unused and perhaps worse, unuseable, can be altered to re-useable, used differently and more intensely, and in other dimensions. The idea of <u>inactive</u> records must not apply to archivists themselves or their archives. Nor can they afford to be seen as isolationist and non-interactive.

METHODOLOGY

This study examined the archive programs and the institutional record-keeping and document management practices of the seven participating colleges. The field investigation was conducted by S. Weldon, project archivist-consultant, under the supervision of the project's co-directors, J. McDonald and L. Micikas.

The purpose of the evaluation and survey was to gather sufficient information by which to judge the feasibility, in principle, of cooperative effort as a way to assure sound document management and record preservation activities in the participating colleges. This was not an effort to collect descriptive numerical data, although some offices and departments in some of the colleges surveyed did report this kind of data. Full confidentiality of the results of the study were assured.

The colleges selected for the study were a sample of the four-year institutions in the Pennsylvania portion of the Philadelphia metropolitan region which were members of the Tri-State College Library Cooperative and which had distinctively religious-based values at the core of their educational philosophy and mission. Five of the colleges in the study are affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church, one is an independent non-profit institution but associated with a Catholic religious order, and one

is an independent Protestant school affiliated with the American Baptist Churches. All of the colleges in the study offered at least a bachelor's degree and some had master's level graduate programs. Although no effort was made to study all the colleges fitting the criteria for selection, the study's sample represents 70% of the qualified colleges in Philadelphia and its immediately surrounding counties in Pennsylvania.

The data collection phase of the project was conducted in two stages. In the first stage, data about each college's archives were collected by means of a survey form completed by the institution's representative (Appendix One -- Archives Survey). This survey form (developed by the project archivist-consultant) also elicited information concerning this person's perceptions and attitudes about records management at the institution. In the second stage, data on records management practices were collected by means of another survey distributed to college administrative and academic departments (Appendix Two -- Records Management Survey). This survey, developed by the project archivist-consultant as well, also elicited information from these respondents about their perceptions and attitudes concerning archives.

Each college was visited twice during the data collection phase of the project. The first visit, made by the project co-directors, accomplished two objectives. One, it allowed the co-directors to

acquaint each institution's representative more fully with the purposes and methods of the study and to request their help in managing the records management survey. Two, it provided the opportunity for an extensive interview with this individual concerning archives and records management at their college. This interview was guided by the archives survey form described above. The information collected was subsequently transcribed, returned to the institutional representative for correction or verification, and, finally, forwarded to the project archivist-consultant to serve as an initial basis for his evaluation.

The second visit was an extensive site and service evaluation conducted by the project's archivist-consultant. Its objective was to gather additional data regarding each institution's archives program.

The records management survey forms were distributed to all organizational units -- academic and administrative -- which appeared likely to collect and store documents. These units were identified through a study of each college's catalog, organizational charts, annual reports, and similar documents. The institutional representatives provided important guidance on which offices and departments should receive survey forms, and also assumed responsibility for their distribution and collection. Survey forms were accompanied by a letter from each institution's president, both

authorizing and encouraging potential respondents to cooperate with the study.

In order to minimize the time a unit head would need to spend completing the records management survey form, it was divided into two sections: one for policy related information, the other directed to practices and procedures. The former part was to be completed by the unit chief, and the latter by an assistant. The investigators reasoned that the unit head was the appropriate person to discuss policy and the assistant, because of his or her closeness to daily routine, could best respond to the requests for detailed procedural information.

The objective of the data analysis phase of the project was to examine the state of archives and records management at each of the participating institutions and to determine the feasibility of cooperative effort in the collection, control, and preservation of the collective records. Data review was conducted principally by the project archivist-consultant. The basis for the review was the Guidelines for College and University Archives, published by the Society of American Archivists (1979). Because these guidelines are directed to large colleges and universities, and establish standards that smaller institutions cannot be expected to meet, only those issues considered essential for any archives program were addressed.

These issues are:

1) Core Mission and Support. A core mission which clearly establishes the archives, states its goal and purpose, and provides an institutional mandate of support and authority should be published and distributed throughout the college.

2) Administrative Support. Proper staffing, financial support, space requirements, and climate control should be provided.

3) Collection Development. Clearly stated policies for collecting, appraising, and accessioning records according to accepted archival principles should be established in writing. Authority to collect all records which are of archival value should be given to the archivist.

4) Processing. The proper processing of records according to archival principles of arrangement and description, the conservation of records, and the means to provide proper access to the records when needed should be established.

5) Records Management. A records management program which allows for the proper creation, use, and disposition of institutional records should be established.

Data relating to each college were summarized separately and the results of the evaluation, together with the project archivist-consultant's recommendations, were submitted to appropriate institutional representatives in the form of a report describing the condition of archival and record-keeping activities on that campus. Collective data were then examined to identify areas of common interest and concern and to evaluate the potential for group effort.

In the final phase of the project, a plan for a cooperative and coordinated archives and records management program was developed and presented to the institutional representatives. This plan proposed specific objectives for cooperative effort, identified the resources needed to meet these objectives, and suggested a general outline for its implementation.

FINDINGS

Core Mission and Support: Of the seven participating institutions, five have officially established archives programs. Of these, four are administered directly under the president; one is administered through the library. None of the five archives programs in existence reported having a formal, published statement of support and authority.

Administrative Support: Most of the established archives programs are physically housed in the college's library. In general, storage space, work space for archivists, and work space for researchers are limited. None of the institutions has a facility which provides for full climate control.

Four of the institutions enjoy the services of an officially appointed full- or part-time archivist; in most cases this is a religious with some formal training but with extensive experience and commitment to the institution. In two colleges, the archivist is supported in her activities by a part-time assistant. Three institutions also reported some student help.

Collection: Collection activities vary across the participating institutions, both in the degree to which they have been formalized and in the amount of material which has already been collected. Only one of the schools has a published collection policy. All of the institutions (including those without officially established archives) report having collected minutes and reports. Many also have collections of photographs, faculty publications, and some office files. In contrast, financial reports and student files do not seem to have been generally collected: only one of the participating schools reported having any financial records in its archives.

Appraisal and accessioning of records are performed by the archivists. Most institutions do not have published guidelines governing appraisal. Accessions are tracked in a variety of ways.

Processing: In those institutions in which archivists are currently processing records, standard archival principles are, in general, being applied. Finding aids have been developed for two of the collections.

Records Management: In only one of the surveyed institutions is some form of records management an archival responsibility. Most college departments do not have staff with formal training in records management; most do not have published retention schedules; and retention decisions appear to be based on a variety of criteria. In most cases, noncurrent records are stored in the departments or in alternate storage. Significant interest was expressed in retention schedules, filing systems, and records management training.

The survey results revealed a set of widely differing archives and records management policies and practices among the participating institutions. Nevertheless, a number of striking common problems emerged from the data. For example, all institutions are concerned about the adequacy of their facilities for records storage. All of the institutions could benefit significantly from a formal records management program. And, although the issue is more immediate for

some colleges than for others, all of the institutions will need to face the growing complexity of institutional records management and the demands this will place on already limited human and financial resources.

In light of the homogeneity of the institutions and the commonality of the problems, it would appear that cooperative action, even in a very limited sense, is not only feasible, but desirable. The alternative, individual institutional action of the sophistication required to fully control increasing numbers of records, while possible, does not seem feasible in the present financial environment of the colleges surveyed.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT, ARCHIVES, AND COOPERATIVE EFFORT

It appears to CDICL that the most appropriate way to begin thinking about the challenge of cooperative effort is to see it as a problem in the design and implementation of a distributed information system. A distributed information system is one in which the resources of the system and their management are, to a greater or lesser extent, placed at points where they can accomplish system objectives most successfully. That is, it is probably unrealistic and unnecessary to view a possible network as an organization

dispensing largesse to needy archives and records management programs, and their users, from a central service point.

Instead, we suggest that what is required is coordinated activity which 1) introduces and maintains sound records management and archival activities on seven (or more) college campuses in 2) ways that are consistent with the information state, priorities, resources, and opportunities of each affected institution. If a network is to be created it probably must be one which optimizes the objectives of each college's archives and records management system and does not suboptimize these goals to the objectives of a central or controlling network.

This does not mean that a possible network would not have a life of its own and be strong and influential. But its strength and influence would be for support and coordination of the effort distributed among the various colleges, for helping each to realize its fullest possible potential, regardless of how different those realized potentials were one from the other.

We believe that this network should be established and developed within the context of an existing campus-wide information system, the college library. The resources for <u>significant</u> cooperative effort for archives and records management can probably only be had within this context. As we have noted earlier, the management of archives,

institutional records, and library bibliographic materials are issues in the management of information and should be conceived as problems in the control of two or three levels of the same resource, not as problems in the control of two or three separate kinds of resources.

In some of the colleges in the survey, archives are already part of the library organization. But CDICL recognizes that an institution may not want to place archives and records management in the library, perhaps because the library's internal organizational climate would be inhospitable to this addition. Similarly, a library administration may not want to have the responsibility for archives and records, arguing that they are not prepared to provide professional supervision and service for this new activity and are ill prepared to speak vigorously for records management. Likewise, archivists may not wish to report to a library administration, maintaining that this would tend to diminish the institution-wide character of their tasks.

CDICL believes that in some instances (not necessarily any in the colleges studied) these may not be insignificant considerations. However, we believe that for the technical and professional reasons adduced earlier in the report, libraries, archives, and records management belong together. Moreover, the benefits to an institution of archives cooperative effort within a library context can be substantial and probably outweigh the drawbacks.

The elements of an archives and records management system which should be present in every institution and which cooperative effort should help each institution obtain can be grouped into five areas:

1. Institutional Commitment: an understanding that all documents created in the course of activities for which an employee is payed belong to the college; a systematic approach to managing the "life cycle" of a record; the carefully complete and secure preservation of all important documents and artifacts (this also to include records of activities associated with the college but not necessarily fully part of its official administrative or academic "workings", e.g., Holy Family College's association with the Polish community in Philadelphia and Eastern College's association with third world social and economic development); service to or for a larger community; fund-raising and financial support.

2. Intellectual Management of Materials: filing systems; record inventories; document appraisals and retention schedules; archival accessioning and finding aids; systems for retrieving information from inactive and semi-active records, for assuring confidentiality of archived records, and for proper destruction of records.

3. Physical Management of Materials: office and departmental filing and storage systems; processes for transfer of documents to archives; shelving and storage of semi-active and archived documents; hardware and software for accessing and retrieving stored material; environmental control and physical security; methods for assuring the continuing stability and preservation of storage media.

4. Staff Training and Expertise: sufficient number of staff; knowledge of records management and archival principles and practices; knowledge of physical preservation practices; knowledge of information systems design, management, and evaluation; ability to teach and train academic nonprofessionals and professionals; adequate training and supervision for student assistants.

5. Computer-Based Management: hardware and software to support archives and records management; system training and support; methods for managing system obsolescence and system security.

In suggesting a network organized as a distributed system, CDICL is very aware that some elements of an archives and records management program already exist on every campus. We are not proposing a new system to replace these existing elements. Rather, at the core

of our thinking is the idea that existing programs could be enlarged, strengthened, and, if necessary, redirected, and that on those campuses where a weak or virtually nonexistent system obtains, the college can be provided with the advice and encouragement needed to establish or begin the serious development of an appropriate program.

Given good leadership and the required resources, over time, the network should be able to assure each college that because of the lower costs associated with standardization and shared professional activities, its own archives and records management goals can probably be met with greater success than if it were to attempt to maintain its own program without network support.

PROPOSED ARCHIVES AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT NETWORK

CDICL proposes that the institutions participating in the network feasibility study create a formal affiliation for the purposes of achieving the following goals and objectives:

1. To seek to have a formal archives and records management program established in every college which is a member of the network and to encourage other appropriate colleges to join.

2. To help each member college to articulate goals and objectives for its own archives and records management program.

3. To provide the formal mechanisms by which the membership, collectively, can help each college achieve its archival and records management objectives, including securing the physical and human resources required to maintain a vigorous program.

4. To help each college measure the success of its archives and records management system.

5. To establish programs, collectively, which provide for the appropriate administrative and scholarly uses of the institution's records and archives.

It is unlikely that a network could implement all of these objectives in a short period, even if it wanted to. Priorities would have to be set by the membership, strategies adopted, and resources acquired. However, if a network is established it is crucial that some activity begin immediately, to assure the member institutions that the network is viable and not stillborn.

CDICL suggests that an implementation schedule resembling an inverted triangle could be adopted. In such a scheme the network could agree to begin its existence with discussions and coordinated activities not requiring extramural funding. Examples of these are: 1) securing institutional commitments to the principles of archives and records management and to the purposes and objectives of the network, including, possibly, its development within a library context; 2) establishing network priorities and strategies; 3) researching and preparing requests for external financial support.

At the next level, and on a somewhat broader base, the membership could use its own professional resources to begin the process of introducing archival and records management concepts and practices to library staff and, subsequently, to college staff, especially clerical and similar support employees. Also at this level the membership could begin exploring cooperative purchase of materials. By the third level outside funding resources might be available and the membership could begin in earnest its programs of record surveys, record inventories, common filing and appraisal systems, and other such activities for the collective good. Support for staffing and supplying these activities would, of course, be part of this level.

Successive levels of activity could draw the membership into increasingly more sophisticated projects such as creating computer based inventories and finding aids, cataloging initiatives using

MARC-AMC, joint microfilming of records, establishing a records center to serve all of the membership, and creating a common records and archives database, perhaps in conjunction with the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collection Libraries (PACSCL).

In all of this it would be important not to lose sight of two principles. One, the differences in the state of archives and records management at each college would suggest that not every school would benefit equally in the early stages of the network. Schools with no archives would probably take much more than they could give back. But gradually all the archives would find themselves in approximately the same condition and able to proceed with common activities.

Two, standardization of data collection and control and other common activities would not preclude each college from developing unique programs or seizing special opportunities. Two colleges in the survey expressed interest in serving a much broader constituency than its college community. One suggested it might consider becoming a county historical society because there was none in its county. Another said it might grow into a regional museum and historical society reflecting the preponderance of certain ethnic minorities in the neighborhoods surrounding the campus. Both should be encouraged to explore these possibilities, with the network serving to help them achieve these goals as it might be able to do so.

MEMBERSHIP

We suggest that the initial membership of the proposed network be the seven colleges in the network feasibility study, plus any other small independent colleges in southeastern Pennsylvania which wish to join and which acknowledge the centrality of religious values in the statement of their educational missions. We believe that such homogeneity in size and purpose augurs greater success for network governance and for obtaining scarce resources from an increasingly besieged extramural funding environment.

CDICL is convinced that the results of the study can be applied to other homogeneous groups of organizations: any group with common missions and techniques. However, for the colleges in this study the common distinguishing feature is a commitment to religious values and their centrality to the institution's tasks.

Although it is an arbitrary distinction, a small college can be defined as one with approximately two thousand students. By southeastern Pennsylvania we mean an area bounded approximately by the Lehigh Valley to the North, the Delaware and Maryland borders to the south, and the Susquehanna River to the west. Included in such boundaries are colleges such as Albright, Allentown College of St. Francis de Sales, Alvernia, Cabrini, Cedar Crest, Elizabethtown, Lancaster Bible, Manna Bible, Messiah, Moravian, Muhlenberg, and Philadelphia College of Bible.

RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT

In the beginning the proposed network would have no resources of its own. Or, more properly, only the resources of each member, already heavily committed, would be available. And, without belaboring the obvious, whatever resources the network would require would follow from the membership's consensus on activities and their priority.

There are at least three possible places from which the network could seek resources for the development of archives and record management programs: the member institutions, corporate and foundation grants programs, and in kind donations of services and equipment. College senior officers can be persuaded that archives and records management are important and serious matters, deserving proper financial support. In the surveys we encountered a number who already are convinced and more who appear willing to be approached. But the process of securing additional money from colleges is not likely to be an easy one.

We believe that in light of this, it is only within a library context that a network can flourish. Libraries already contain the resources required to manage information. Extramural funders are more likely to grant requests for money for new programs if institutions can show that they have used all available resources to best advantage. Should the network be structured without library involvement,

it might still be possible to find the required funds. However, we believe it would be substantially more difficult to justify a request for foundation or corporate support as a stand-alone network, at a time when the archival and records management professions are recognizing the importance of full cooperation with libraries.

In the beginning the administrative needs of the network would be modest. CDICL has indicated it is willing to guide the process of discussion and securing commitments and funding. Early on it would be necessary to create an informal representative advisory council to help set priorities for funding, to commit the network to certain strategies, and to act on receiving new members. Beyond this it should be the tasks of the network which determine its governance structure, with the caveat that the experience of information networks in the 1970s and 1980s shows them to be overgoverned and undermanaged.

CONCLUSION

In the end, it is only the evidence of possible benefits which is likely to persuade an institution to address the management of its records, including those which it will keep forever, within a network environment. What are these benefits?

1. AWARENESS. Talk is cheap. But talk can be very valuable, especially if it brings experts together to share perspectives, techniques, and advice which might otherwise be unavailable to a college. Discussion can help a college understand its records management problems. Discussion can keep a college from duplicating effort, from reinventing the archival and records management wheel. And discussion is needed to provide the critical mass of ideas required to direct action properly. A network provides the structure and the continuity for discussion.

2. PROBLEM DEFINITION. Once it is aware of the state of its records and archives, an institution must articulate and define the problems to be solved. Examples of these are: the lack of full control over college documents and records; the lack of college-wide retrieval (filing) mechanisms, each man and woman, office and department, doing whatever seems right in their own eyes; the possible loss of archival service when contributed services are no longer available and funds to hire lay staff are not easily had; incomplete or wrong, or both, knowledge of the documentation of college activities and programs; not enough space to store records and archival documents; lack of knowledge on the proper storage of

official information in various formats and media (paper, photographs, magnetic disks, videotapes, etc.).

An archives network can bring together the professional resources of its membership to define, describe, and analyze the problems encountered in each institution. The experience gained in one college can be extended and refined in another, thereby enhancing the group's skills in problem recognition and definition.

3. PROBLEM SOLUTION. Preeminently, a network is far more likely to receive external funding for an attempt at solving records problems than is a single institution working alone. If cooperation is likely to provide better problem definition than that available in a single institution, so are proposed solutions likely to be better. And, obviously, if proposed solutions require cooperative action, a single college, not cooperating, is at considerable disadvantage. Examples of common solutions to common problems are shared microfilming, shared storage, shared system software, shared purchasing, shared staff, and shared records description and control procedures.

Accordingly, CDICL recommends that the seven colleges participating in the archives feasibility study carefully consider the benefits of cooperative effort and begin a discussion leading to the formal creation of an archives and records management network, preferably within the context of the college library. CDICL also reiterates its commitment to help establish this network and to seek funding for its support.

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APPENDIX ONE:

ARCHIVES SURVEY

HOLY FAMILY COLLEGE
CENTER FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
INDEPENDENT COLLEGE LIBRARY

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19114

The Center for the Development of the Independent College Library (CDICL) at Holy Family College has obtained a state funded grant to conduct a feasibility study on the possibility of creating a cooperative archives/records management program among several small colleges in the Philadelphia area. Seven colleges have agreed to participate in the initial study: Chestnut Hill, Eastern, Gwynedd-Mercy, Holy Family, Immaculata, Neumann, and Rosemont.

The purpose of the study is twofold: first, to determine the feasibility of an archives/records management network and, if such proves feasible, to suggest its design and function; second, to create a report for each individual participating college on the state of its archives and record keeping practices, with suggestions on how to improve these functions. Each college will receive a copy of this individual report even if it chooses not to become a member of a cooperative network.

The study will consist of two separate surveys which will be distributed throughout each of the participating colleges. The two surveys are:

1) Archives Survey. This will be answered by the college archivist, or someone serving in that capacity, and will address all aspects of the college's archives program.

2) Departmental Records Survey. This will be distributed to each department in the college and will survey general record keeping practices within each department as well as the department's attitudes towards records management and archives.

Attached to this letter you will find a copy of the questionnaire which you are requested to answer. Please grant your fullest attention to this phase of the project. I feel that successful completion of the study will be of great value to all of the colleges involved.

Sincerely,

Shawn Weldon
Project Archivist

ARCHIVES SURVEY DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this survey is threefold: first, to collect as much information as possible about the archives program at each college and to determine, as best possible, which aspects of a classic archives program are in existence at each institution; second, to discover which aspects of records management are present at each college and to what extent the archives is involved in records management; third, to determine the attitude of the archivist at each college toward the possibility of the institution becoming a member of a cooperative archives/records management network.

The intent of the survey is to collect information to help each institution determine how to establish or enhance its archives and records management program. Please be assured that the survey carries no implicit criticism of your program.

The survey is arranged to be answered as quickly and simply as possible. It is divided into ten major areas, lettered A through J, as follows:

A. Establishment and Support
B. Physical Characteristics
C. Collection Policy
D. Staffing and Budget
E. Appraisal
F. Accessioning
G. Processing
H. Reference and Outreach
I. Records Management
J. Network

Within each section is a list of questions. You may answer the questions in the manner you find easiest. You may address each question separately or answer several related questions as a whole. Please make certain to elaborate upon your answers to provide as much information as possible. On quantitative answers, such as number of researchers or volume of records, exact figures are not necessary. Approximate figures will be sufficient.

If the archives serves as a repository for collections other than the institutional records of the college, i.e. manuscript collections, records of a religious order, etc., please provide information for each group of records. Your response is of utmost importance for the success of this project. I feel that the result of this study will be of great benefit to both the archives and the college. Thank you for your help.

ARCHIVES SURVEY

COLLEGE_____
PERSON COMPLETING SURVEY_____
DATE_____

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS AS COMPLETELY AS POSSIBLE. PLEASE ELABORATE ON YOUR ANSWERS. CLARIFY AND EXPLAIN WHERE NECESSARY.

A. Existence and Purpose

1. Does the college have an archives?
2. Where is the archives located administratively?
3. Does the archives have an institutional mandate of support?
4. Is there an institutional commitment to the archives?
5. What type of support is given?
6. Why is the archives important?
7. What is the role of the archives at the college? What role would you like to see for the archives?
8. What are the major problems facing the archives and the execution of its duties?
9. Are there plans for the future growth or expansion of the archives?

B. Physical Characteristics

1. Where is the archives physically located?
2. What are the physical characteristics of the archives? area? facilities? shelving? equipment? work space? research space? climate control? other?
3. Are space and facilities adequate?
4. What physical improvements should be made?

C. Collection Policy

1. Does the archives have an official collection policy? What is it?
2. Who determines the collection policy?
3. What type of collections are in the archives? institutional records? records of a religious order? outside manuscript collections? faculty personal papers? other?
4. What are the inclusive dates of the records?
5. What forms of records are in the archives? paper? photographs? sound recordings? computer records (tapes, punched cards, etc.)? microfilm/fiche? other?
6. What is the approximate volume of the records?
7. What is the approximate volume of new records which enter the archives yearly?
8. Are there plans to expand the collection policy of the archives?

D. Staff and Budget

1. What is the staffing situation in the archives? how many staff? full or part-time? background? education? archival training? job descriptions?
2. What type of budget does the archives have? How are funds allocated?

E. Appraisal

1. Who appraises records to decide on inclusion in the archives?
2. Are there any published guidelines governing appraisal?
3. What appraisal values are used? legal? fiscal? operational? historical?
4. What is the background and training of the person performing the appraisal?
5. Who owns or has control of the records in the archives?
6. What are some of the major record types in the archives? minutes? financial records? reports? office files? student records? other?

F. Accessioning

1. What accessioning policies and procedures does the archives follow?
2. Who decides which records are accessioned into the archives?
3. What type of control does the archivist have in accepting or rejecting records?
4. What controls are used to record and track accessions?

G. Processing

1. Is someone available to process collections?
2. What is their background and training?
3. What principles of arrangement are used?
4. What level of arrangement is used? record group? series? folder? item?
5. What type of description is given to collections?
6. Approximately how many collections are fully processed?
7. How are records stored? boxes? folders? other?
8. What type of conservation work is performed?

H. Reference and Outreach

1. Approximately how many research or reference requests are made?
2. What type of reference and research requests are made? scholarly? institutional? other?
3. What type of finding aids are available to locate records?
4. What are the days and hours which the archives is open for research?
5. What staff is available to answer requests?
6. Are there any types of outreach programs to advertise and increase awareness of the archives?
7. Does the archives arrange exhibits or records?

I. Records Management

1. Is there a records management program, or elements of a records management program, at the college?
2. Is the archives involved in any way in a records program for the college?
3. Are there official retention schedules for the records of the college?
4. Who determines the schedules?
5. What criteria are used?
6. Does the archives provide advice or assistance to the departments on record keeping?
7. Does the archives store inactive records of the college that do not have archival value?
8. If so, how much space do these records occupy?
9. Do you feel the college and archives could benefit from a records management program?
10. What aspects of records management would you like to see established?

J. Network

1. Would you be interested in seeing the college become part of a cooperative archival network with other area colleges?
2. What would you see as the advantages of such a network?
3. What would you see as the disadvantages?
4. What would you like to see the archives gain from an archival network?
5. What would you see as the role of an archival network?

APPENDIX TWO:

RECORDS MANAGEMENT SURVEY

Dear :

Holy Family College is pleased that College is participating in the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) funded archives network feasibility study. As you may know, the investigation is being conducted by the Center for the Development of the Independent College Library (CDICL) a unit of the Holy Family College Library. The purpose of the study is to examine the archival and record keeping policies and practices at each of the institutions involved (Chestnut Hill, Eastern, Gwynedd-Mercy, Holy Family, Immaculata, Neumann, and Rosemont) and to determine the potential for cooperative effort in this area.

Between January 11th and 26th, 1988, CDICL's co-directors, Dr. Joseph McDonald and Dr. Lynda Micikas, visited with to discuss the data-gathering phase of the study. Part of the discussion focused on plans for a survey of recordkeeping practices within all academic and administrative departments of your institution. A sample copy of the survey instrument is enclosed.

A copy of the survey will be sent to each department head, and will indicate where a secretary or administrative assistant can supply the requested information. You have my assurance that the results of the survey will be kept confidential and it will not be possible to identify a specific institution in any published results of the survey.

These departmental surveys are the most critical part of the study. Because most of the individuals who will be asked to complete these surveys will not be familiar with the study or its importance, the project's co-directors and I would greatly appreciate a formal announcement from your office alerting the department heads to the survey and authorizing them to complete it.

Thank you very much for your help in assuring the success of this study. We hope the project will be the beginning of a collaborative effort among our institutions to better secure and preserve our collective histories.

HOLY FAMILY COLLEGE
CENTER FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
INDEPENDENT COLLEGE LIBRARY
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19114

The Center for the Development of the Independent College Library (CDICL) at Holy Family College has obtained a state funded grant to conduct a feasibility study on the possibility of creating a cooperative archives/records management program among several small colleges in the Philadelphia area. Seven colleges have agreed to participate in the initial study: Chestnut Hill, Eastern, Gwynedd-Mercy, Holy Family, Immaculata, Neumann, and Rosemont.

The purpose of the study is twofold: first, to determine the feasibility of an archives/records management network and, if such proves feasible, to suggest its design and function; second, to create a report for each individual participating college on the state of its archives and record keeping practices, with suggestions on how to improve these functions. Each college will receive a copy of this individual report even if it chooses not to become a member of a cooperative network.

The study will consist of two separate surveys which will be distributed throughout each of the participating colleges. The two surveys are:

1) Archives Survey. This will be answered by the college archivist, or someone serving in that capacity, and will address all aspects of the college's archives program.

2) Departmental Records Survey. This will be distributed to each department in the college and will survey general record keeping practices within each department as well as the department's attitudes towards records management and archives.

Attached to this letter you will find a copy of the questionnaire which you are requested to answer. Please grant your fullest attention to this phase of the project. I feel that successful completion of the study will be of great value to all of the colleges involved.

Sincerely,

Shawn Weldon
Project Archivist

THE DEPARTMENTAL RECORDS SURVEY-DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Departmental Records Survey is to gather information on the record keeping practices of all of the departments within the college. Its goal is to determine where and how institutional records are collected and maintained and to identify what elements, if any, of a records management program are present. The survey also seeks to reveal departmental attitudes towards a records program if one exists and what the department would seek to gain from such a program if it were to be established.

The survey is divided into two parts. Part I includes questions 1-11 and seeks information concerning the general record keeping practices of the department. This part of the survey should be answered by someone in the department who works with the records.

Part II includes questions 12-14 and, similarly, seeks information concerning the interest of the department in an archives and records management program and its expectations from such a program. This section should be completed by the head of the department.

The survey should not take more than one hour to complete. Space has been provided after each question for your answer. Answers can be continued on the opposite side of the page. Please elaborate as much as necessary.

Information gathered by this survey will be used to help determine the feasibility of an archival and institutional records network among Philadelphia area religious colleges. The study carries no implicit criticism of your policies or practices with regard to records nor is it an attempt to change the present records management and control patterns. Confidentiality of the survey results is assured.

Your help is essential for the success of this project. Please answer the questions as completely and thoughtfully as possible. Thank you.

DEPARTMENTAL RECORDS SURVEY

College: _____

Department: _____

Person Completing Part I: _____

Date Completed: _____

Phone #: _____

Person Completing Part II: _____

Date Completed: _____

Phone #: _____

Please complete this survey by February 29, 1988 and return to:

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS AS COMPLETELY AS POSSIBLE. CLARIFY AND EXPLAIN WHERE NECESSARY.

PART I

1. Is someone in the department specifically charged with maintaining records? Who? Does this person have any training in record management procedures?

2. Are there formal procedures to control the storage, retrieval and return of records?

3. Are there published retention schedules for departmental records? Who determines these schedules?

4. Are these schedules followed by the department? Does someone ensure that schedules are followed?

5. Where are records stored when they are no longer in active use (e.g., in the department, in the archives, in alternate storage)?

6. Who determines which records are kept or destroyed?

7. What are the criteria for these decisions (e.g., legal, fiscal, operational, historical)?

8. Are the records used by the department duplicated by other departments? Which records? Which department has authority over the original record?

9. Does the department use or maintain computer records of any kind? Which records? What type of media (disk, tape, etc.)? How are these records stored?

10. Is there an inventory of departmental records?

11. List, as briefly as possible, the various records which are used or stored by the department, the inclusive dates, the amount of space they occupy, and their form (computer printout, files, etc.).

PART II

12. Would the department be interested in a records management program for the college? What aspects of a records program would you like to see established (retention schedules, filing system, records center)?

13. Would someone in the department be available to maintain a records management program if one were established? How much time per week would someone be available to maintain a program?

14. Would you be interested in seeing an archives program established at the college. If such a program already exists or were to be established what do you perceive as its role? Do you use the services of the college archives if one currently exists? Do you feel that the archives could be improved in any way?

15. Are there any organizational units under you keeping records (minutes, correspondence, reports, syllabi, etc.)? If so, what unit? Who is responsible for this unit?